

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 06919 220834Z

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

IO-10 OMB-01 SAM-01 SAB-01 VO-03 SCA-01 /079 W

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R 211554Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 288

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, SF, NI, OAU

SUBJECT: VISIT OF ISRAELI GENERAL CAUSES STIR

1. ISRAELI GENERAL MEIR AMIT PAID BRIEF VISIT NIGERIA
EARLIER THIS MONTH AFTER VISITING SOUTH AFRICA.
NIGERIAN PRESS, CITING AMIT'S BACKGROUND AS ONE-TIME
HEAD ISRAELI MILITARY INTELLIGENCE AND HIS VISIT TO SOUTH
AFRICA QUESTIONED GERNERAL'S PRESENCE AND PURPOSE IN
COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY SINCE RELATIONS BETWEEN NIGERIA
AND ISRAEL SEVERED IN 1973.

2. STORY GIVEN OUT BY MID WESTERN STATE GOVERNMENT OVER
WEEKEND REPORTED AMIT WAS HERE IN HIS CAPACITY AS
PRESIDENT OF KOOR INDUSTRIES OF ISRAEL TO DISCUSS
POSSIBLE POINT VENTURE WITH NIGERIAN FIRM, BENDEL
STEEL STRUCTURES, LTD. STATE GOVERNMENT ALSO AT PAINS
DENY GENERAL AMIT HAD BEEN AN OFFICIAL GUEST OF MID
WEST GOVERNMENT. THIS DESPITE STATE PRESS RELEASE AND
PHOTO SHOWING GENERAL TOGEHTER WITH SECRETARY TO STATE
GOVERNMENT AT LUNCHEON. MID WEST GOVERNMENT IS CLAIMING,
HOWEVER, THAT SECRETARY IS ALSO A DIRECTOR OF BENDEL
COMPANY AND HAD ATTENDED LUNCH IN THE LATTER CAPACITY.

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3. PRESS TODAY HINTS THAT FMG HAS ORDERED INVESTIGATION INTO ISSUANCE OF VISA TO AMIT, APPARENTLY GIVEN HIS AT A NIGERIAN EMBASSY IN EAST AFRICA.

COMMENT: WHETHER OR NOT FMG WAS AWARE OF OR HAD APPROVED GENERAL'S VISIT, MANNER IN WHICH PRESS REPORTED STORY HAS MADE AMIT'S PRESENCE HERE SOMEWHAT OF EMBARRASSMENT FMG. CONNECTION OF AMIT WITH MILITARY, INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY (AND ALL THAT IMPLIES THESE DAYS), AND SOUTH AFRICA SERVED PQT FMG ON DEFENSIVE.

EYEBROWS OF NIGERIA'S RESIDENT ARAB DIPLOMATIC CORPS WERE UNDOUBTEDLY RAISED BY VISIT. IN ANY EVENT, APPEARS BOTH FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS ARE PUBLICLY BACKPEDALING TODAY, PUTTING AS MUCH DISTANCE BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND THE GENERAL AS IS POSSIBLE.

WHILE WE HAVE NO REASON BELIEVE GENERAL AMIT HERE FOR ANY OTHER THAN COMMERCIAL/BUSINESS PURPOSES, WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFO EITHER TEL AVIV OR PRETORIA MAY HAVE ON GENERAL AND HIS TRIP TO AFRICA THIS MONTH.
CROSBY

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